

The Mayor will advise that the Council is no longer acting as a Planning Authority as at 7.27pm.

Title	CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY – PART A MITIGATION PLAN
Agenda Number	17.021/20*
Strategic Plan Reference	1, 2, 3, 4
File Reference	02/73
Author	Manager Environmental Services
Responsible Officer	Manager Environmental Services
Reporting Brief	The Director Environment and Development Services presenting a report from the Manager Environmental Services on the community engagement report and draft of the Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan.
Attachments	A. Engagement Report B. Draft Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan

Background

1. In June 2020, Council endorsed a draft Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan (17.012/20) for public consultation. This draft plan drew on customised reports for identifying opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well scientific literature and publicly available expert advice. Feedback was also provided by members of Council’s Climate Change Strategy Consultative Group.
2. The project plan endorsed in July 2019 (17.026/19) included working closely with the Regional Climate Change Initiative and University of Tasmania, due to a large strategy template project funded by the Southern Tasmania Councils Authority (STCA) in 2018. The draft Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan has been developed independently due to that project being delayed. The draft Climate Change Strategy – Part B Adaptation Plan is currently under development by Council officers. It is hoped that data from the STCA project will still contribute to that plan. Mitigation refers to actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while adaptation refers to actions to support adapting to the effects of climate change.
3. The purpose of this report is to present to Council the outcomes of the community engagement process on the draft Climate Change Strategy - Part A Mitigation Plan and to present the updated strategy for endorsement for implementation.

Council Policy

4. Climate change is a broad reaching issue that cuts across environmental, social and financial considerations. These relate to all of the strategic objectives within the *Huon Valley Council Strategic Plan 2015 – 2025*.
5. Council passed a motion that the development of this strategy commence in July 2019 (13.001/19).
6. Community engagement has been completed in accordance with Council's Communication and Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework.

Legislative Requirements

7. There are currently no explicit legislative obligations for Council to develop a climate change strategy. In a broader sense however the legal principles of negligence, duty of care, and appropriate risk management are clearly relevant to climate change. With increasing acceptance that climate change is a shared responsibility, including Local Government, it is prudent that Council take actions to address the risks arising from climate change. The development of a climate change strategy is a key step towards this action.

Risk Implications

8. As outlined above Council is potentially exposed to risks of not addressing risks arising from climate change, and should be conscious of the principles of negligence, duty of care and appropriate risk management. The draft plan is a key step in identifying and prioritising actions to reduce risks to Council associated with potential obligations to reduce the contribution to greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.
9. There is some risk that actions designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions may have unintended or negative impacts (e.g. technology that is energy-intensive to manufacture or results in chemical pollution). Proposed actions have been well researched to help mitigate this risk and implementation of actions will be closely monitored. New research and additional information will be considered where available and regular updates of the plan will take place as appropriate.
10. There is a risk that some members of the community will not be satisfied with the strategy or the associated actions within it. The engagement activities undertaken help to minimise this risk, however there is a wide range of opposing views in the community relating to climate change and what mitigation actions are appropriate to focus on. The strategy aims to balance the expectations of the community through promoting a research-based and practical approach to the mitigation of GHG emissions.

Engagement

11. Engagement on the draft Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan was undertaken at *Consult Level* in accordance with the Council's *Community Engagement Framework* and is detailed in the Engagement Report included as Attachment A to this Report.
12. Members of the Climate Change Strategy Consultative Group were given the opportunity to provide comment on the draft in late April 2020, prior to the public consultation. These comments were followed up with more detailed discussions to ensure a common understanding between Council staff and the individual members. A group discussion was unable to be held at this point in time due to Covid-19 restrictions and concerns.
13. A workshop on this matter was held with Councillors on 2 June 2020 and a draft Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation was endorsed to be released for public consultation on 24 June 2020. A second workshop was held with Councillors 1 September 2020, to discuss adjustments made to the draft following the community engagement feedback. The changes made are also outlined in the Engagement Report attached.
14. Following the endorsement of the Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation, the document will be made available on the website and by request at the Customer Service Centre.

Human Resource and Financial Implications

15. The implementation of the draft plan will require some human resources commitment. The actions are designed to be implemented by the responsible department, with the Manager Environmental Services providing specialist advice when necessary. This approach is considered best practice for sustainability and is more likely to result in climate change considerations becoming imbedded in Council operations.
16. Some actions will require external funding or a future budget allocation to implement. The likely capacity and resources available to the Council have been taken into account when setting targets and timeframes. It is also recognised that some actions are likely to create longer term cost savings (e.g. energy efficiency measures).

Discussion

17. The draft Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan has been prepared using a range of best practice principles and research, including Huon Valley-specific reports on the main sources of Council's greenhouse gas emissions, as well as those from industry and the community.

18. The draft plan includes a summary of the key research, work undertaken to date, the strategic context, and targeted actions to reduce Council's greenhouse gas emissions as well as support actions to assist the broader community to reduce their emissions.
19. The engagement process indicated support for the approach taken in the plan, with 81% of survey respondents strongly supporting a focus on Council emissions in the plan. 73% also strongly supported Council conducting education and advocacy on climate change. There was notably strong support amongst respondents for actions relating to ethical investment, the treatment of organic waste, and sustainable urbanism.
20. Topics frequently raised in the engagement responses included emissions from forestry, monitoring of other industries, additional education and provision of information to the community, and success measures or targets. A full report on the engagement feedback is provided in Attachment A. In response to this feedback, six additional actions were included, and information on emissions from forestry and agriculture and working with the community was added to the plan. In summary the additions included:
 - A paragraph on page 12 that further clarifies the combined emissions of agriculture and forestry is higher than the 7% shown in the graph from the STCA report. This was under reported because they did not have access to localised data on methane emissions from agriculture and wastewater or carbon emissions from associated land clearing.
 - A paragraph on page 15 titled "working with the community" which recognises there may be community-led initiatives that have not yet been identified within the strategy that may still be appropriate for Council to support.
 - Action 1.3.5 – "Analyse the plant and fleet operations of the road works unit to look for efficiency opportunities".
 - Action 1.6.3 – "Consider adding an emissions reduction or zero net emissions target to the strategy".
 - Action 2.3.3 – "Advocate for improved bus services".
 - Action 2.6.5 – "Advocate for the retention of native forests and for sustainable agricultural practices".
 - Action 2.6.6 – "Promote the environmental, economic and social benefits of maintaining native forests".
 - Action 2.7.1 – "Seek budget to employ an Environmental Education Officer to provide advice, education and resources to support the community in reducing GHG emissions and environmental impacts, and to assist in implementing the strategy".
19. Additional formatting and graphic design work will be undertaken prior to the release of the final strategy.

Conclusion and Recommendation

20 A draft Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan and Engagement Report are attached and discussed within this report. As outlined above and within the attachments several additions have been made to the strategy as a result of the consultation feedback. It is recommended that the plan is endorsed for implementation.

17.021/20*

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- a) **The report on the public consultation and draft of the Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan be received and noted.**
- b) **The Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan as included as Attachment B is approved for implementation.**
- c) **The General Manager is authorised to make formatting and graphic design changes to the Strategy.**
- d) **The Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan be made available to the public on the Council website.**

17.021/20*

MOTION

CR GIBSON

That:

- a) **The report on the public consultation and draft of the Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan be received and noted.**
- b) **The Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan as included as Attachment B is approved for implementation, with Action 2.6.5 changed to read:**

Action	Milestone	Timeframe (subject to funding)	Responsibility
2.6.5 Encourage and support the retention of native forests and for sustainable agricultural practices <i>Land management practices and techniques can have a significant bearing on GHG emissions and sequestration. Case studies/examples and education resources can help to encourage and support positive actions and practices.</i>	Resources provided	On-going	Environmental Services

- c) **The General Manager is authorised to make formatting and graphic design changes to the Strategy.**

- d) **The Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan be made available to the public on the Council website.**
- e) **The Climate Change Strategy-Part A Mitigation Plan be reviewed on a biennial basis.**

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- b) **The Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan as included as Attachment B is approved for implementation.**
- c) **The General Manager is authorised to make formatting and graphic design changes to the Strategy.**
- d) **The Climate Change Strategy – Part A Mitigation Plan be made available to the public on the Council website.**

PROCEDURAL MOTION

RESOLVED

CR DOYLE

CR O'MAY

That the matter be deferred until a future Workshop as determined by the General Manager.

Councillors Doyle, Newell, Wilson, Prince, Lovell and O'May voted for the motion and Councillors Enders, Gibson and Campbell voted against the motion.